



COUNCIL AGENDA: 6/17/08

ITEM: 6.2

Memorandum

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND
CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Nadine N. Nader

SUBJECT: SEE BELOW

DATE: June 2, 2008

Approved

Date

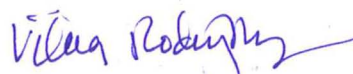
6/4/08

**SUBJECT: REVISIONS TO COUNCIL POLICY 5-6 [Transportation and Environment
Committee Referral – Item g]**

On June 2, 2008 staff presented a report on proposed revisions to Council Policy 5-6 to the Transportation and Environment Committee.

Upon the motion of Councilmember Judy Chirco, and seconded by Councilmember Nora Campos, the Committee requested that the item be cross-referenced for full Council consideration and recommended approval of the proposed revisions to Council Policy 5-6 on Traffic Calming Policy for Residential Neighborhoods.

Attached is the report that was presented to the Transportation and Environment Committee.


for NADINE N. NADER
Agenda Services Manager

Attachment

Memorandum

TO: TRANSPORTATION AND
ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

FROM: James R. Helmer

**SUBJECT: REVISIONS TO COUNCIL
POLICY 5-6**

DATE: 05-21-08

Approved



Date

5/23/08

Council District: City-wide

RECOMMENDATION

The Transportation and Environment Committee (T&E) approve the proposed revisions to Council Policy 5-6 on Traffic Calming Policy for Residential Neighborhoods and forward to City Council for approval; and direct staff to report back to T&E in the Fall of 2009 with a status report on the effectiveness of implementing the updated policy.

OUTCOME

Council Policy 5-6 will be updated to better respond to community concerns of adverse traffic impacts in residential neighborhoods.

BACKGROUND

Council Policy 5-6 addresses Traffic Calming for Residential Neighborhoods and was most recently adopted by the City Council in June 2001. The policy was developed with a goal to improve traffic conditions and livability within San José neighborhoods, and to plan and build traffic calming improvements with new developments or projects. Among other provisions, Council Policy 5-6 outlines the guidelines and processes for review of residential traffic concerns and implementation of appropriate traffic calming measures.

The City has had a longstanding goal of addressing neighborhood traffic concerns through various Council policies. For example, Council Policy 8-4 on Installation of Traffic Restraint Devices was initially approved in 1978. In 1987, this policy was superseded with Council Policy 5-5 regarding Neighborhood Traffic Management Programs. Similar to the current policy, these policies were primarily intended for residential neighborhoods.

During Fall 2007, a series of 10 Residential Traffic Calming Community Meetings were held to gather input from San José residents on the existing policy, to solicit feedback on potential changes to the policy, and to recommend priorities for the City to consider in continuing to address neighborhood traffic concerns.

On March 18, 2007 City Council accepted a T&E report on the Residential Traffic Calming Community Meetings and directed staff to return to T&E on the following items:

1. Research the feasibility of 'red light running' (RLR) systems for the purpose of possible consideration of a RLR pilot program.
2. Research the viability of increasing fines for traffic violations.
3. Update the traffic calming policy to include:
 - recommendations contained in the March 3, 2008 T&E report
 - expanding the installation of physical and electronic devices
 - consideration of cumulative traffic impacts of speed, volume, crashes, pedestrian activity and proximity to schools and/or parks
 - provisions for neighborhoods to self-fund physical traffic calming devices
4. Investigate a partnership with school districts as a way of using bond monies for radar signs and other traffic calming devices near schools.
5. Implement Assembly Bill 321 which allows municipalities to lower speed limits to 15 mph in qualifying school zones after analysis by the City Attorney's Office is completed.

On May 12th a community meeting was held to obtain input on the proposed policy changes. The draft policy submitted with this report incorporates input received at this meeting and subsequently submitted.

ANALYSIS

Council Policy 5-6 Update

The attached Council Policy 5-6 has been revised to incorporate all of the recommendations approved by the City Council on March 18, 2007. The major revisions to the policy as highlighted below are primarily related to the implementation of comprehensive traffic calming projects which are intended to slow traffic within, or divert traffic from residential neighborhoods; or to enhance pedestrian safety.

- The threshold criteria to determine if a roadway is eligible for a comprehensive traffic calming project has been modified to incorporate the use of 85th percentile speed vs. the use of average speeds specified by the existing policy.

- The type of residential roadways and the threshold criteria that is required for a street to be eligible for comprehensive measures is clarified.
- Local residential streets and neighborhood collectors that do not meet the threshold criteria may be eligible for a comprehensive traffic calming project if the City Traffic Engineer determines that a unique or unusual condition exists, such as those experiencing a high crash rate or extraordinary changes to normal traffic conditions due to their proximity to a major traffic corridor.
- Eligible projects are prioritized based upon the severity of the traffic conditions, taking into account cumulative traffic impacts.
- Dynamic warning signs, such as school zone beacons or radar speed display signs, and enhanced crosswalks such as those with flashing beacons, have been added as a comprehensive traffic calming measure.
- Incorporates opportunities for General Plan streets, transit routes and emergency response routes to be eligible for dynamic warning signs if the roadway is experiencing substantial levels of speeding and funding is available for installation and ongoing maintenance of the warning signs.
- Provides opportunities for neighborhoods, community groups, schools and/or businesses to donate funds for the installation and/or maintenance of eligible comprehensive traffic calming projects under the provisions of Council Policy 1-17. This policy provides guidelines to departments on fundraising, sponsorships and contributions and can be viewed at www.sanjoseca.gov/clerk.

Projected Impacts

With the adoption of an updated Traffic Calming policy, it is anticipated that there will be a renewed interest in many neighborhoods throughout the City for traffic calming projects. In addition, it is anticipated that more residential neighborhoods will become eligible for comprehensive measures with the new policy criteria.

Eligible projects would be prioritized annually each spring, and based upon available funding and resources, the highest ranked projects would be considered for construction the following fiscal year. Projects not selected in a given funding cycle would remain on the priority list for consideration in the next funding cycle, and prioritized along with newly eligible projects. In addition to being a recommendation made by the City Auditor's Office in their 2007 report on the Audit of the Traffic Calming Program, approximately half of the 27 cities benchmarked use a prioritization process to rank traffic calming projects. As stated in the audit, and by many of the other cities, having a methodology to prioritize projects is necessary to ensure that limited resources available for traffic calming are applied to neighborhoods with the most severe traffic conditions.

The proposed priority ranking is based on the level of speeding and volume on a residential street and also takes into consideration crash history and proximity to pedestrian generators and unique roadway conditions. There is a maximum allotment of points that can be allocated for pedestrian generators and unique conditions, as these factors by themselves, in the absence of speeding, excessive volume, or a history of crashes, do not necessarily indicate the need for traffic calming.

Balancing Increased Demand for Traffic Calming with Limited Resources

It is important to note that given the substantial operating and capital reductions that have occurred in the Department of Transportation over the past six years, with additional reductions occurring in FY08-09, the ability to manage the level of data collection, analysis, community outreach and construction activities required with comprehensive projects will be limited. Specifically, there are approximately 30% fewer engineering and maintenance staff to evaluate, design, and implement comprehensive projects. It should be noted that the staff responding to requests for comprehensive traffic calming projects are also responsible for many other duties.

Given the expected increased demand for traffic calming, it is anticipated that there will be added delays even for those neighborhoods that become eligible for a comprehensive project. To the extent possible, DOT will work with SNI staff to assess funding opportunities for comprehensive projects within these neighborhoods. DOT will also continue to work with Public Works and other departments to identify opportunities for incorporating traffic calming in planned public or private development projects. In addition, traffic conditions in 'eligible' neighborhoods will be shared with the Traffic Enforcement Unit of the Police Department for possible inclusion in their neighborhood and school enforcement efforts.

The proposed modifications to Council Policy 5-6 were based on extensive input from the community through the series of ten Community meetings in the Fall of 2007 and an 11th community meeting in May 2008, benchmarking of traffic calming programs in 27 other municipalities and City Council direction. However, the proposed policy changes are substantial in that they incorporate new threshold criteria and a priority ranking system. To assess the effectiveness of the new policy, it is proposed that DOT return to T&E in the Fall of 2009 with a status report on the updated policy's implementation. The status report would include input received from the community and include recommendations for any additional policy update.

PUBLIC OUTREACH/INTEREST

- ☐ **Criterion 1:** Requires Council action on the use of public funds equal to \$1 million or greater. **(Required: Website Posting)**
- ☒ **Criterion 2:** Adoption of a new or revised policy that may have implications for public health, safety, quality of life, or financial/economic vitality of the City. **(Required: E-mail and Website Posting)**

- ☐ **Criterion 3:** Consideration of proposed changes to service delivery, programs, staffing that may have impacts to community services and have been identified by staff, Council or a Community group that requires special outreach. **(Required: E-mail, Website Posting, Community Meetings, Notice in appropriate newspapers)**

At a community meeting held on May 12, 2008 the draft policy was shared with approximately 24 residents and a school district representative. The meeting notice and draft policy was e-mailed to residents who had attended the Fall 2007 community meetings and to Strong Neighborhood Initiative community liaisons. The meeting notice was also posted on the City's website.

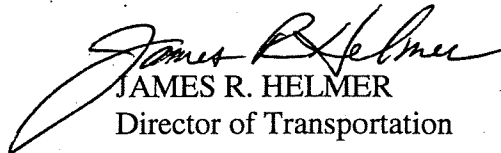
This memorandum will be posted on the City's website for the June 2, 2008 T&E Committee agenda.

COORDINATION

This memorandum has been coordinated with the Police Department, the Fire Department, the City Attorney's Office and Strong Neighborhood Initiative staff in the Redevelopment Agency.

COST IMPLICATIONS

The proposed FY08-09 Traffic Capital Improvement Program includes \$300,000 for Traffic Calming, of which approximately one-third provides for staffing costs necessary to implement comprehensive projects. A neighborhood project can range from \$15,000 for a series of three road humps to several hundred thousand for a neighborhood-wide project with many traffic circles, median islands or bulb-outs. Using an estimated \$50,000 for each project, the level of funding available in FY08-09 will provide for up to four comprehensive projects.


JAMES R. HELMER
Director of Transportation

For questions please contact Laura Wells at 975-3725

City of San José, California

COUNCIL POLICY

TITLE TRAFFIC CALMING POLICY FOR RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS	PAGE 1 of 7	POLICY NUMBER 5-6
EFFECTIVE DATE April 25, 2000	REVISED DATE June xx, 2008	
APPROVED BY COUNCIL ACTION April 25, 2000, Item 9j, Resolution Nos. 69541 and 69542; June 26, 2001, Item 6.11, Resolution No. 70524, June xx, 2008, Item 6.x, Resolution No. xxxxx		

BACKGROUND

High traffic speeds and volumes, as well as inappropriate behavior of motorists can adversely impact San Jose neighborhoods. Traffic can also have a negative effect on pedestrians and bicyclists, particularly near schools, community centers and parks. The City responds to these conditions by conducting traffic engineering studies which may result in the installation of traffic control devices, pedestrian and bicycle improvements, or physical roadway features. The Police and Transportation Departments may also deploy officers to enforce traffic and parking regulations, and provide traffic safety education to school children and adults. For the purpose of this policy, these efforts are referred to as *traffic calming*.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Council policy is to provide a framework for the general processes, responsibilities and outreach related to traffic calming so that interested parties can effectively access this City service. The performance measure goals contained in this policy are desirable, but subject to available City resources and the level of active community involvement.

POLICY

It is the policy of San Jose to minimize the negative impacts associated with traffic on all streets, particularly within residential neighborhoods and near schools, by applying education, enforcement, and sound engineering solutions developed with strong community involvement. Traffic calming solutions are categorized into two levels: basic and comprehensive.

Basic traffic calming services are those traffic control devices and programs that are implemented on a day-to-day basis to regulate, warn, guide, enforce and educate motorists, pedestrians and bicyclists; and generally apply to all streets. Residential neighborhoods with traffic impacts that cannot be addressed through basic traffic calming services may be eligible for additional traffic calming measures referred to as comprehensive traffic calming projects.

Comprehensive traffic calming projects are physical roadway design features or dynamic signage and warning systems which are intended to slow traffic within, or divert traffic from residential neighborhoods, or to enhance pedestrian safety.

All traffic calming services and projects are to be coordinated with other transportation policies and be consistent with the General Plan; and where possible, coordinated with other capital and private development projects. Traffic calming projects should be designed and implemented with the goal of not transferring negative traffic conditions from one neighborhood roadway to another. For the purpose of this policy, 'cut-through' traffic is defined as traffic that is using a local residential street to avoid arterial or major collector roadways, and is not traffic that has an origin or destination within the immediate neighborhood.

BASIC TRAFFIC CALMING SERVICES

A. Request for Traffic Calming Services

Individuals or organizations with concerns about negative impacts of traffic should contact the City's Department of Transportation (DOT) to request a traffic engineering analysis. If the concern regards the enforcement of traffic or parking regulations, the Traffic Enforcement Unit (TEU) of the Police Department, or the Parking Compliance Unit of DOT will be notified. If the concern regards the need for education, a traffic safety presentation will be scheduled.

B. Services and Schedules

DOT performs a wide variety of traffic engineering studies. The appropriate study will be performed to address the requester's particular concern and situation. If traffic control devices, such as signs or pavement markings are needed, DOT will coordinate the installation. The performance measure goal for evaluating a concern and installing an appropriate device is 35 calendar days from the date the request is received.

Some studies require extensive data collection and field observations, or are subject to independent policies and guidelines, such as those for stop signs, crosswalks, and bike lanes, and will require additional time. In addition, devices that require City Council approval, such as heavy truck restrictions may require several months for analysis, public review and implementation. The goal is to take the time and conduct an appropriate level of outreach to ensure sufficient community involvement and awareness of intended actions.

If traffic safety education is requested or recommended to address driver, pedestrian or bicyclist behavior, the goal is to perform a traffic safety education presentation within eight weeks. However, the presentation schedule is often dependent upon coordination of a desired timeframe with neighborhood or school representatives.

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COMPREHENSIVE TRAFFIC CALMING PROJECTS

A. Initiation of Comprehensive Traffic Calming Projects

Neighborhoods that are experiencing adverse traffic conditions that cannot be addressed using Basic Traffic Calming Services may be eligible for a comprehensive traffic calming project. If an adverse traffic condition cannot be addressed through basic traffic calming services, DOT will automatically initiate a comprehensive traffic calming analysis.

B. Comprehensive Traffic Calming Projects

A comprehensive traffic calming project generally involves the construction of a physical roadway feature(s) or installation of a dynamic warning sign or message system, and includes the following types of projects:

- ***Level 1 traffic calming projects*** are intended to reduce vehicular speed or enhance pedestrian safety. Level 1 projects require neighborhood involvement and outreach as described in Section F and Outreach Requirements. Examples of roadway features or signage include, but are not limited to, median islands, chokers, traffic circles, road humps, enhanced crosswalks, and school zone beacons or radar speed display signs.
- ***Level 2 traffic calming projects*** involve the redirecting of traffic to address excessive volumes resulting from cut-through traffic. Level 2 projects require extensive neighborhood involvement and outreach as described in Section F and Outreach Requirements, and ultimately, City Council approval. Examples of projects and features in this category include traffic diversion islands, full or partial street closures, and changing the direction of travel on a street.

Examples of roadway features, dynamic warning signs and message systems are contained in DOT's *Traffic Calming Toolkit*, which is available for community use. The *Toolkit* can be viewed at www.sanjoseca.gov/transportation and is intended to provide information regarding the various traffic calming services that are available.

C. Eligible Roadways

The implementation of comprehensive traffic calming projects is limited to residential, 2-lane local or minor neighborhood collector roadways, with a maximum posted speed limit of 30 mph. Streets designated as General Plan streets, transit routes, or used as emergency response routes are generally not eligible for comprehensive traffic calming measures, except for dynamic speed signs and messaging systems. These roadways by their classification, or function, are intended to carry higher volumes of traffic and accommodate a large vehicle mix.

Threshold Criteria:

The following threshold criteria must be met for the implementation of comprehensive traffic calming projects:

- Local Streets: (posted speed limit of 25 mph and 1,000-3,000 vehicles per day)
 - 85th percentile speed of 33 mph or more, or
 - 40% or more of the daily traffic is 'cut-through' traffic
- Neighborhood Collector Streets: (posted speed limit of 25 mph or 30 mph and 1,000 – 6,000 vehicles per day)
 - 85th percentile speed of 33 mph or more on 25 mph posted streets, or
 - 85th percentile speed of 37 mph or more on 30 mph posted streets

D. Prioritization of Comprehensive Projects

Eligible comprehensive traffic calming projects will be prioritized for implementation based upon the severity of the traffic conditions by taking into account the following cumulative traffic impacts: speeding, volume, cut-through traffic, crash history, proximity to pedestrian generators such as schools, parks and community centers and unique roadway conditions. Priority points will be assigned as shown below.

Priority Ranking

Speed	2 points for each mph difference between the 85 th percentile speed and the posted or prima facie speed limit
Volume	1 point for each 500 vehicles over 1,000 vehicles per day 5 points if 40-65% or more ADT on local street is cut-through traffic between arterials or major roadways, 10 points if higher than 65%
Crash History	5 points for each speed related crash in the last 3 years
Pedestrian Generators (15 points max.)	5 points for each school, park or trail access, library, or community center along roadway, 3 points if within 1 block, 2 points within 2 blocks
Unique Conditions (15 points max.)	5 points for designation as a bike route or as a General Plan pedestrian corridor, or for proximity to neighborhood business district, or existing/ planned transit hub 5 points for evidence of crashes or speeding, such as long skid marks or broken glass 5 points for missing sidewalk section 5 points for unique roadway geometry that substantially restricts visibility 5 points for high crash rate

*ADT – average daily traffic

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At the close of each funding cycle (fiscal year), the highest ranked projects will be considered for construction in the following fiscal year, depending upon funding, resource availability and community support. However, adjustments in schedules of traffic calming projects may be made based upon coordination with scheduled capital improvement or private development projects, or availability of funding specific to the project.

E. Reassessment of Warranted Comprehensive Projects

Projects not selected in a given funding cycle will remain on the priority list for consideration in the next funding cycle and prioritized along with newly eligible projects. As resources permit, projects may be reassessed to ensure that the priority ranking reflects significant changes in land use, speed, volume, crash history, pedestrian activity, or other conditions that may have occurred on any given roadway(s).

F. Community Support for Selected Comprehensive Projects

Substantial community support is required for the installation of physical roadway devices on either a trial or permanent basis, including the active involvement of a neighborhood traffic committee. Generally, committee members must own property or reside within the affected project area. If the project area falls within an recognized Neighborhood Association, then the traffic committee should also include a member from that Neighborhood Association. Utilizing relevant data and community input, DOT and the traffic committee will develop a proposed traffic calming plan. Based upon potential impacts of the proposed plan, DOT will determine the affected project area. The traffic committee will distribute a petition developed by DOT to all households, businesses, schools, and absentee property owners within the project area. Some physical devices impact adjacent property owners more than others, and have specific installation guidelines and criteria that must also be met.

Trial Installations: The petition must have 50% + 1 support of all affected households, businesses and schools within the project area before a trial installation is implemented (Level 1 projects) or presented to City Council (Level 2 projects) for authorization to proceed.

Permanent Installations: The petition must have 50% + 1 support of all affected households, businesses and schools within the project area for implementation of the final plan (Level 1 projects) or to be scheduled for presentation to City Council (Level 2 projects) for approval.

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G. Comprehensive Project Schedule

Most comprehensive projects will require a trial installation, which will generally occur within four months from the date the plan is finalized and supported by the community or approved by City Council. The duration of the trial will normally be six months, during which time City staff will evaluate the effectiveness of the installation. During the trial, minor adjustments may be made to the plan based upon review by City staff and input from the community. Based on all relevant data and community input, DOT, in coordination with the traffic committee, will develop a proposed plan and schedule for permanent installation of the comprehensive project that will be presented to the community for approval.

Level 1 projects supported by the community will be programmed for implementation. Community supported Level 2 projects will be presented to City Council for consideration, and, if approved, programmed for implementation. Installation of final comprehensive projects will be dependent upon the complexity of the project and available resources for construction and ongoing maintenance of installed devices.

H. Reapplication for Comprehensive Traffic Calming Project

Neighborhoods that do not qualify for a comprehensive traffic calming project may reapply in two years from the date of DOT's final consideration. The two-year time period may be waived by the City Traffic Engineer if significant land use changes or other significant change has occurred.

COMMUNITY FUNDING FOR COMPREHENSIVE TRAFFIC CALMING PROJECTS

The City may accept donations from residents, neighborhoods, community groups, schools and/or businesses for the implementation and ongoing maintenance of comprehensive traffic calming projects that are eligible for installation under the provisions of this policy. Donations will need to comply with all provisions of City Council Policy 1-17, which can be viewed at www.sanjoseca.gov/clerk.

OUTREACH REQUIREMENTS

Residents, businesses and schools that may be affected by the outcome of a comprehensive traffic calming project, will be notified in writing of any planned actions and schedule. Comprehensive projects that involve the installation of physical roadway features will normally require at least one (1) community meeting with households, businesses and schools in the project area. Notices for any community meeting will be distributed at least ten (10) calendar days in advance. Notices will be provided to all properties within the project area as defined in Section F. The methods of notification will be consistent with those contained in Council Policy 6-30. Projects will also be

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coordinated with providers of emergency response services, transit services, utilities and related services as needed.

POLICY EXEMPTIONS

Local residential streets and neighborhood collectors that do not meet the threshold criteria in Section C may be eligible for comprehensive traffic calming measures if the City Traffic Engineer determines that a unique or unusual condition exists which results in negative traffic impacts caused by a high number or rate of crashes, vehicles traveling at excessive speeds, significant pedestrian activity, or proximity to major traffic corridors or traffic generators that contribute to extraordinary changes to normal traffic conditions. These roadways will be prioritized along with the roadways that meet the threshold criteria based upon the ranking methodology in Section D.

General Plan streets, transit routes, emergency response routes, may be eligible for dynamic warning signs or messaging systems if substantial levels of speeding are present as determined by DOT through an engineering traffic study, and funding is available for their installation and ongoing maintenance.

DEVELOPMENT IMPACTS IN EXISTING NEIGHBORHOODS

All proposed private and public development projects will be reviewed for potential traffic calming or pedestrian safety issues and a study will be required when necessary as determined through the City's development review process. DOT, Public Works and other City staff or consultants will be actively involved in the review of any proposed development that is determined to potentially create or significantly increase an adverse traffic condition in an existing neighborhood. It is the intent of this involvement that the development will be designed or that traffic calming or pedestrian or bicycle conditions will be placed on the developer to eliminate or minimize the portion of the adverse impacts that are a result of the development.